

Dagnall (J.M.)

THE  
HISTORY AND USES  
OF THE  
IGNATIA AMARA;  
OR,  
ST. IGNATIUS' BEAN,  
FROM SEVERAL AUTHORS.

WITH REMARKS ON ITS PECULIAR PROPERTIES IN REMOVING GENERAL  
NERVOUS DEBILITY, AND VARIOUS PAINFUL AND IRRITABLE

CONDITIONS OF THE

BRAIN AND NERVOUS SYSTEM,

BY JOHN M<sup>ES</sup> DAGNALL.

IN WHOSE CASE OF NERVOUS DEBILITY, THE IGNATIA EXTRACT WAS  
FIRST SUCCESSFULLY USED; AS PREPARED BY HIS ONLY  
AUTHORISED DISPENSER OF THE SAME.

Aug 1961



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JOHN M. DAGNALL.

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## P R E F A C E.

"To do good, and to communicate, forget not."—*Hebrews xiii., 16.*

THE sincere Christian cannot read the above injunction of the Apostle to the Hebrews, without being reminded of an important social duty, "to communicate, forget not;" and if all would act upon the principle, how much good might be accomplished.

But such is the amount of selfishness and narrow-mindedness in this money-getting age—this age of Mammon-worship—that few can be found to communicate to their fellow beings anything worth knowing, unless such communication can be made subservient to the rapid and inordinate accumulation of wealth, although the communicator may be surrounded with an abundance of this world's goods, and existing under the certain conviction, that it is in his power by so doing, to lessen the amount of human suffering—of human misery, and thereby to increase the amount of human happiness.

But it seems that, in the majority of instances, any departure from the rule, is only calculated to insure the laugh of the grovelling and narrow-minded, with certain annoyance from the designing and interested.

Hence the author is prepared to expect his little treatise—written with the design of benefitting a very large class of sufferers—will not fail to encounter opposition, and to experience a portion of those unfair modes of treatment.

To obviate this, he could easily have increased the size of the present publication to a more costly one; but this would have kept it from a very large and numerous class of invalids, whose sufferings he desires to alleviate.

Hence he trusts his little work will be found to contain all the most valuable facts yet known respecting the useful qualities of the IGNATIA AMARA.

It is confined to as few words as possible consistently with making its contents clearly understood; and his honest conviction is, that it will be found deserving the attention of all who suffer from any of the various and multifarious manifestations of nervous disorders.

The authors from whom the extracts are made are well known to a considerable portion of the public, and easy of reference; and no details are given on the author's own responsibility, which cannot at the same time be corroborated by an abundant amount of written testimony, emanating from all classes of society, and gathered from all parts of the United States.

Not a county, or division of the country exists, which has not furnished its quota to the overwhelming amount of evidence that has been for months accumulating in favor of the hitherto much neglected IGNATIA, and the whole of which may at all times be seen and inspected at his address,

186 FULTON STREET, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

# IGNATIA AMARA:

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## ITS HISTORY, USES, &c.

*Ignatia* is the systematic name of a genus of plants in the Linnean System, class Pendandria, order Monogynia, and the AMARA is one which affords the Faba Indica, Faba Febrifuga, Faba Sancti Ignatii, or St. Ignatius' Bean. The plant is common in the West Indies and the Phillipine Islands, but is very ill called a bean, being truly a gourd.

" It grows to a great height, when there is a tree to support it, for it cannot support itself. It has a stalk as thick as a man's arm, angulated, light but not firm. The leaves are very large, oblong, and undivided, and they have the ribs very high upon them ; they are broad at the head, and grow narrower to the point, and are of a deep green color. The flowers are very large and of a deep blood red ; at a distance they have the aspect of a red rose. The fruit is large and roundish ; it has a woody shell, and over that a thin skin, bright and shining. Within there are twenty or thirty seeds ; they are of the bigness of a small nutmeg when we see them ; they are roundish and very rough upon the surface ; each is of a woody substance, and when tasted, is of the flavor of Citron seeds, but extremely bitter and nauseous. The color is of all, gray or brownish."

Sir John Hill, from whom the above description is taken, says in his Family Herbal—a work now out of print, but which may be frequently purchased, at second-hand book stores, price from one to two dollars :—“ The seeds are what we use in medicine, and called the St. Ignatius' Bean. It is a very powerful Medicine, but it has many virtues. The powder given in a small dose, occasions vomiting and purging ; it is much better to give it in tincture, when no such effects happen from it. Tis of an excellent effect against nervous complaints, it will cure the falling sickness, (epileptic fits,) given in proper doses, and continued for a long time. The tincture is the best for this purpose. Some have given the powder in small quantities against worms, and that with success. Its extreme bitter makes it very disagreeable, and the taste continues in the throat a long time, whence it occasions vomiting. We neglect it very much at present because of its roughness, but it would be better if we found the way of giving it with safety. There are gentler medicines but none of them so efficacious ! It will do service in cases that the common methods do not reach.”

Hooper in his Medical Dictionary, fol. 638, fifth edition, says that “in the Phillipine Islands, the IGNATIA is used in all diseases.”

Chambers in his Cyclopaedia, folio edition, four volumes, published in 1799, says : "The Ignatia is much celebrated for its medicinal virtues, being recommended in vertigoes, lethargies, epilepsies, asthmas, quartian agues, and worms. It is also given against distempers of the stomach, and as an alexipharmac. That Neuman says he has known intermitting fevers cured by drinking, on the approach of a paroxysm, an infusion of some grains of the seed in Carduus water ; and that Dr. Lewis had been informed that two grains were found to have as much effect as a full dose of bark."

Huc, in his travels through Tartary, Thibet, and China, a work recently published, of Appletons' Popular Library, 200 Broadway, New York ; in two volumes, says in vol. I, folio 159, that "the Ignatia is called Kou Kouo ; that if taken inwardly it modifies the heat of the blood and extinguishes all inflammations. It is an excellent specific for all sorts of wounds and contusions ; and enjoying a high character in the Chinese "Materia Medica," is sold in all chemists' shops. The veterinary doctors also apply it with great success to the internal diseases of cattle and sheep."

Jahr, in his new manual of homoeopathic practice, recommends it for "neuralgia or tic, spasms, constipation and violent headache, giddiness, nervous dyspepsia or indigestion, epileptic fits (consequence of deep-rooted emotion, especially grief), great heat in the head, aversion to food, flatulence, jerking of the hands, feet, and various muscles of the body, want of sleep, dreams of an unpleasant character, trembling, palpitations of the heart, anguish, as if the patient had committed wrong, fearfulness, great tendency to start, tendency to blush at trifles, impatience, involuntariness, inability to be cheerful, to be talkative, sadness, feelings of internal chagrin, &c., &c."

To its good effects in habitual costiveness, dyspepsia, incessant shaking, nervous headache, sleeplessness, palpitation of the heart, confusion of thought, blushing, restlessness, mental inquietude, determination of blood to the head, silent wretchedness, reluctance to go into society, failure of memory, unfounded dread of the future, sensation of soreness in the chest, and of dullness, weight, and frequent noises in the head, with inability to concentrate the mental powers for any considerable time on a given subject, he can himself bear witness, inasmuch as these formed the symptoms he mostly complained of.

After all the usual routine, and almost irregular means, had been tried without success, it was resolved on, as a last resource, to try the powers of the IGNATIA AMARA. With the result the public have long since been made acquainted ; and although these results may appear to many marvellous in their character, yet numbers of cures quite as extraordinary in their nature have since then been effected, and are being effected daily through the same agency. In fact, letters bearing testimony to cures of an almost miraculous character are in hand, and, with the full permission of the writer, may at all times be inspected ; and so frequent is now become the receipt of these kind of communications, that not a morning's post arrives without bringing its contribution of letters, conveying the most grateful thanks and acknowledgments to the benevolent author of the facts, which have been so liberally placed before the public.

The valuable qualities of the IGNATIA were first made extensively known during the winters of 1854-5. In a few weeks, testimony to its efficacy began to arrive, and at the moment of writing this (May 25, 1856), embracing a period of nearly two years, the enormous number of 1,000 testimonials have been received, and are still being received in an increasing ratio. They embrace communications from every class of society, and form on the whole such an amount of testimony in favor of this simple agency, as cannot fail to satisfy all who will give themselves the trouble to examine its details, and investigate its authenticity. The letters thus received have been carefully filed, and the symptoms described by the various writers as having been removed by the Ignatia Pill.

From which it appears they have succeeded in removing violent nervous headaches of long standing, nervous deafness, affections of the stomach, digestive and alimentary organs, highly excited, irritable conditions of the brain, preventing sound or refreshing sleep, and in many cases any sleep at all, giddiness, noises and beating in the head, melancholy or depression of spirits, imaginary fears, failure of the powers of body and mind, timidity, bashfulness and dislike to society, involuntary blushing, thoughts of self-destruction, lowness of spirits, excessive and groundless fear, dread of coming evil, insanity, &c., St. Vitus's dance, spasms, great tendency to start, to be frightened, convulsive and epileptic fits, palpitation of the heart, biliousness, sluggishness and derangement of the liver, cold feet and hands, very low circulation of the blood, a great deal of pain moving all over the system, electric shocks darting from the small of the back to the head, rendering the sufferer almost blind, great weakness across the bowels, and sometimes across the small of the back, habitual constipation, great heat of the blood, nervousness resulting from the reverses of fortune, mental anxiety, vicissitudes of life, unhealthy and sedentary occupations, excessive labor of body and mind, the abuse of alcoholic stimulants, natural debility of the constitution, unwholesome atmosphere, improper diet, or from badly treated inflammatory, bilious, and other fevers, fright, bad habits, or bad medical treatment, irritability of the stomach, inducing frequent vomitings and faintings, flatulency, indigestion and loss of appetite; and in Neuralgia or Tic Doloreux its effects have been so extremely gratifying and beneficial, that it may almost be regarded as a *specific*.

To render the work as useful as he has endeavored to make it interesting, he will now proceed to describe the best form in which the IGNATIA can be exhibited for the removal of any of the above named disordered states of the nervous system, accompanying it with such remarks as may tend to guard the invalid against being imposed on by the unscrupulous or the dishonest.

Sir John Hill thinks the best form for its exhibition is the tincture, and certainly it may be classed as one of its least objectionable forms; but there is no question that the Spirituous Extract, prepared by pulverising the Seed or Bean, and subjecting the powder to the action of alcohol, for ten or twelve days, is a better form still. For in the latter case the alcohol, so objectionable to many, and so injurious in many diseased states, is got rid of; and nothing of a stimulant or exciting nature, is taken into the system along with the drug.

The proportion of the Extract and the bodies necessary to bring it into the form of pills, is as follows :

Alcoholic Extract of the Ignatia Amara - - 30 grains.

Powdered Gum Arabic - - - - - 10 do.

*Make into Forty Pills, and take one, an hour after breakfast, and one, an hour before supper, or at least an hour before retiring to rest. Half a Pill night and morning will be found sufficient for very young, very aged, or very delicate persons. The Pills may be easily cut if laid on a damp cloth for a short time to soften them. Or they may be made of the half-grain size at the time of preparing them.*

The quantity required to bring the mass into a good working condition will vary, however, considerably, according to the state of extract, and the temperature of the atmosphere ; and in very warm weather it will be found necessary to add a little starch to make it work well, especially if the pills are intended to be rolled out on a machine ; but as starch is a non-medicinal substance, no harm can arise from any quantity which may be added for such a purpose.

The effect of this compound will be to give relief in seven cases out of every eight in which it may be employed ; but in the ratio of one in every ten, it will be found to produce feelings of nausea, and various unpleasant sensations in the stomach and head ; and as these symptoms evidently arise from the nauseating bitterness of the drug, it becomes a matter of importance, to prevent such kind of effects, provided, however, that it always be done without decreasing the beneficial action of the remedy on the nervous system.

This, it has been found, may be accomplished by passing a current of steam for a few minutes, through the powder from which the extract is intended to be made, which having been carefully done, the extract is easily prepared by steeping three or four ounces of the powder in five times as many ounces (by measure) of alcohol, or spirits of wine, as it is usually called, and allowing it to stand for ten or twelve days, observing to shake it occasionally. At the expiration of this period it should be filtered through blotting paper, and the filtered liquor put into a basin placed over boiling water. In a few hours the spirit will have evaporated, and the Extract will be found at the bottom of the basin, ready for use.

This form of the Extract is the one his dispenser has been in the habit of preparing for the past few months, during which time he has only received two letters complaining of its not having agreed well with the patient. Nevertheless, the IGNATIA must not be regarded as a panacea, or universal remedy for all kinds of nervous affections, and proceeding from whatever cause they may, none but quacks and charlatans would contend that it was so. But a larger amount of success has attended its employment in morbid conditions of the nervous system than has, in all probability, ever fallen to the lot of any single drug to accomplish ; for the correspondence arising from dispensing the Pills is

very carefully kept, accurately filed, and accounts of cures, and testimonials, arranged in such a manner that any required result can be arrived at in a few minutes ; and it is shown in a most satisfactory manner, that numbers of severe and long-standing cases have been *entirely cured* by a single box of the Pills ; that others have required a second, or even a third, to obtain the object desired ; and that only one case in thirty-nine has terminated in complete failure and disappointment. This, however, embraces an amount of success fairly entitling the IGNATIA to a trial by all who have sought the usual routine method of treatment, without relief.

The sources from whence the Extracts contained in this little treatise are taken, are in every case mentioned, and every word, in addition, has its corresponding number, either in the author's own experience or in the testimony of others, at all times open to public inspection and investigation.

The preparation of the Forty Pills, or a quantity sufficient for three weeks use, will not cost those who prepare it for themselves more than 75 cents.

The Bean may be procured from the celebrated herbalists, James' Market. But where it is desirable to avoid the trouble, the same quantity may be procured from the author at an additional cost of 25 per cent., or for One Dollar, which amount may be remitted to 186 FULTON ST., BROOKLYN, NEW YORK.

Letters complaining of disappointment in the action of the drug, as purchased from country druggists, are constantly arriving, and frequently accompanied with samples of the vile trash, sold for the pure and unadulterated Extract.\* Hence the great object with invalids desirous of giving the IGNATIA a fair trial, should be at all times to procure a genuine article ; and this the author has no hesitation in saying they will stand but little chance of procuring unless they take the trouble to prepare for themselves, send direct to FULTON STREET for a supply, or obtain it from some respectable druggist who has been appointed for its sale ; and even then, the purchaser should be careful to see that the author's name and signature appears on the Wrapper and Label which is now affixed to every box of the Pills, without which, none are genuine, and to imitate which, is a felony.

\* With a view to protect the public against such disgraceful proceedings, it has been decided, that in future, all the Ignatia Pills prepared by his dispenser, shall be sold under the appellation of "JOHN M. DAGNALL'S IGNATIA, or NERVOUS PILLS," and bear his own Signature on the Wrapper and Label affixed to each box ; and further, in order to enable all classes of society to avail themselves of the benefits which the genuine preparation of the Ignatia is capable of conferring, that the pills shall in future be put up as follows :

1 grain size,	20 in the box,	} Price 50 cents each.
$\frac{1}{2}$	" 40 "	
1 "	50 "	} Price \$1 each.
$\frac{1}{2}$	100 "	

Hence the remittance of fifty cts. in Postage Stamps for the Smaller Box, or One Dollar for the larger, will be required, and applicants may depend on receiving supplies by the return mail.

During the use of the Ignatia the patient is advised to take as much exercise in the morning, before breakfast, as circumstances will permit ; to use black in preference to green tea, and to take coffee, if coffee is used, only in the morning, and then to take it in small quantities ; but cocoa or chocolate is better than either tea or coffee of any kind. Also to avoid the use of *unnecessary stimulants*, such as wine, liquor, ale, beer, &c. The term unnecessary is intended to refer to the constant taking or sipping of these preparations—a practice but too common with many nervous invalids. As ordinary beverages, they may all be used in moderation, according as each kind is found to agree best with the patient.

The practice of taking opium or laudanum should never be adopted, it should be left off immediately, as no nervous invalid can ever be restored to health so long as the practice continues. An indulgence in snuff, and the consumption of tobacco, should also be avoided ; nothing injures the nervous system more than the habitual and constant use of large quantities of tobacco.

Should the frequent use of opening medicines or enemas have been adopted through an habitually costive state of the bowels, it is advisable to discontinue all such appliances, as they will be found wholly unnecessary, the bowels usually becoming healthy or natural—acting once in twenty-four hours—by the eighth or tenth day after commencing the use of the Extract.

But in the event of the Pills not removing the obstinately costive state of the bowels, nothing as an auxiliary will be found superior to taking daily, until they become regular, a table-spoonful of good *Salad Oil*, in a little warm milk, and eating after it a few prunes, tamarinds, or one or two figs, not failing at the same time, to solicit nature by retiring for a few minutes to the water-closet, punctually at a fixed time every morning. The oil is laxative, nourishing, and restorative.

The Pills do not render the system liable to cold, hence bathing (if advised by a medical practitioner), may be proceeded with in any form during their use.

Sometimes it occurs that an insurmountable objection, or absolute inability, exists to the swallowing of pills ; but this difficulty may be easily overcome by dissolving a pill in two tea-spoonsfull of cold water, and taking the whole or half, as may be thought desirable.

~~MS.~~ Many persons have written and requested JOHN M. DAGNALL, to state the cause and symptoms of his own case of Nervous Debility, the effects and virtues of the IGNATIA AMARA, etc.

**First.**—He would observe, the cause proceeded from Habitual Costiveness and too close Study, Sedentary Life, and the worst forms of Dyspepsia, Incessant Shakings, Nervous Headache, Sleeplessness, Palpitation of the Heart, Confusion of Thought, Blushing, Restlessness, Mental Inquietude, Determination of Blood to the Head, Silent Wretchedness, Reluctance to go into Society, Failure of Memory, etc., all followed and settled into Nervous Weakness and General Debility, which continued for many years, having had the best professional men, and every known remedy used without affording permanent relief.

He then directed his attention to a copy of Hill's Herbal, and the properties of the Ignatia Amara therein discovered, the use of which restored strength and vigor to himself; and since, hundreds of debilitated individuals of both sexes, deemed past recovery by physicians of the first eminence and respectability, and numbers of whom for the purpose of benefitting mankind have come forward and personally attested upon oath, their wonderful release from acute pains, and speedy recovery from inveterate complaints; for its reanimating powers exceed almost credibility; its fine rich Balsamic, Stomachic qualities, its purification of the blood, and above all its complete invigoration of the Nervous System, whereby the whole faculties became restored to their proper power and functions, and the fallen fabric of life is raised up to beauty, consistency and duration, upon the ruins of emaciated and premature decay, to sound and pristine health.

**Secondly.**—It enriched the blood without inflaming it; it braced without stimulating too violently the Nervous System; it freed and disburdened the viscera and other important organs; it removed obstructions and threw off viscid humours; it strengthened the general habit and brought back the muscular fibres to their natural and healthy tone; it secured refreshing sleep, made the head clear and easy, the spirits free, active and undisturbed; and whatever is calculated to produce in a considerable degree all or any of these effects, must be under certain modifications and restrictions equally adapted for every species of decay.

**Thirdly.**—It has also since its first introduction, been successful with young people who have the appearance and air of old age, who are pale, effeminate, benumbed, stupid, and even imbecile; whose bodies are become bent, whose legs are no longer able to support them, who have an utter distaste for every thing, or are totally incapacitated for the performance of its natural functions; when the body is weakened, paleness, bodily decay and emaciation succeed, and the eyes sink into the head

**Lastly.**—The virtues of the IGNATIA AMARA, are daily demonstrated in eradicating the worst symptoms of Nervous Debility, establishing the fame of its certain success in those complaints which strike their roots so deep in the constitution, so fatally to the happiness of mankind; in short, the laudable end of this remedy is the lessening of a great mass of human misery by the alleviation, relief and prevention of those grieved afflictions that are in reality the secret foes of life, and which, while they so extensively surround us, call aloud for skill and interference for their extermination.

## CAUTION.

Correspondents have constantly complained of the impositions practised upon them by retail and dispensing country chemists and druggists, when required to prepare the IGNATIA PILLS ; but until lately no very dangerous or unpleasant effects have followed their dishonest practices. Generally speaking, the effects produced by the compounds dispensed by these gentlemen, were such as left the patient nothing the better, and but little the worse for the trial.\*

Recently, however, the most serious and dangerous consequences have resulted to some who had been so unwise as to place confidence in the assertions of these apparently respectable dispensers of physic ; and this has taken place to such an extent, that the proprietor has received several *dozen* samples of the spurious imitations of the genuine preparation, accompanied by letters complaining of the imposition, and describing the alarming symptoms and acute sufferings which followed the use of the pills.

The glaring dishonesty of these transactions is also further indicated by the fact, that no two of the samples so received are *exactly alike*, although each dispenser assured the purchaser "that the preparation was a genuine article, and had been supplied by a *most respectable wholesale New York house*."

Besides this, it may be remarked, that not one among the whole number of samples approaches either in color, taste, smell, or appearance to the article which his dispenser is now constantly in the habit of preparing. Really, one is at a loss to know at which to feel the most disgust—the fraudulency of these transactions, or the clumsiness of their execution.

A very careful examination of these spurious preparations by gentlemen competent to form an opinion on the subject, lead to the conclusion, that the whole, with one or two exceptions, are formed of strychnine as a base, combined with bitters and aromatics. The latter are evident to the taste and smell ; the former is indicated by analysis and the horrible effects produced upon the system by its use.

It may also be mentioned, that although he has received letters from parties who had prepared their own pills, and acknowledging the benefits resulting from the trial, he has never received a single communication of the same character from invalids of either sex, or under any circumstances, who had ventured to use the compounds so shamefully dispensed.

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 In some instances the purchasers were even told that the " Extract had been procured direct from the author." He would beg leave, however, to assure the public, that in no instance whatever, has he ever supplied a single particle of the Extract to these gentlemen, or to any druggist, apothecary, or member of the medical profession.